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Songs and Splashes

A few of the songs remind us that the poet has lived in New Mexico and Panama, but the impress of the wilderness, of strange places, is not very strong on a temperament perhaps too hospitable to the lighter and more facile emotions. H. M.

MODERN AND ELIZABETHAN

The Poet in the Desert, by Charles Erskine Scott Wood.
(New revised ed.) Privately printed, Portland, Ore.

Maia—a Sonnet Sequence, by Charles Erskine Scott Wood,
with two sonnets by Sara Bard Field. Portland, Ore.

Some years ago—in September, 1915—POETRY reviewed the first of these two books, then just published. Let us reaffirm the opinion then expressed, which referred especially to the *Prologue*, now the poem's first section:

Mr. Wood proves himself a poet not only by the sweep and power of his vision, but by the rich imagery and rhythmic beauty of his free verse at its best. His special distinction is that he really "enters into the desert," that his poetry really presents something of the color and glory, the desolation and tragedy, of this western wonderland.

The new edition of the poem is almost a re-writing of much of it; and for the better, as it is relieved of a good deal of social and political propaganda.

It may be difficult to judge impartially *Maia*, coming as it does in all the luxury of Gothic type on hand-made large-paper, with decorative illustrations singularly personal (at least the frontispiece is confessedly by the author), and of a beauty a bit amateurish perhaps, but delicate and rare. But one may safely record astonish-

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ment that the same man should achieve, when well along in the dangerous middle years of life, these two poems of different moods and modes—the challenging radical modernism of the one, and the old-world freshness and acceptance-of-joy of the other.

It goes without saying that Mr. Wood is a more arresting poet in the western desert than in the Elizabethan garden. The sonnets are, perhaps inevitably, imitative of Sidney or Spenser; while *The Poet in the Desert* is the intensely personal work of a modern observer and thinker, an impassioned challenge to civilization, containing passages of beauty and power. H. M.

CLASSICS IN ENGLISH

Sappho, by Henry Thornton Wharton. Brentano's.

The Golden Treasury of the Greeks, by Alexander Lothian.

Basil Blackwell, Oxford, England.

Medallions in Clay, by Richard Aldington. Alfred A. Knopf.

The Poets' Translation Series: Second Set. The Egoist.

Translators put one under no obligation to consider their work in relation to original texts not included in their books. I shall assume no familiarity with the classic works involved, but shall consider these books principally as English poems upon foreign and antique subjects.

Wharton is the standard Sappho. This new edition outdoes the former, containing useful literal translations,